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NO EXCUSE FOR EXPLOITATION OF VULNERABLE WORKERS

Retail NZ, the trade association representing reputable retailers in New Zealand says it is concerned about the exploitation of vulnerable migrant workers, following the release of Employment Relations Authority decision in which a Wellington store has been penalised \$53,000 for inappropriate employment practices.

“Most retailers in New Zealand work really hard to do the right thing by their employees, and to comply with the law around minimum wage, employment standards and health and safety, and it’s really disappointing to hear of cases where there is clear non-compliance,” Retail NZ’s General Manager for Public Affairs Greg Harford said today.

“The bottom line is that all employers need to comply with the law, and to take all practical steps to ensure that they do. If employers are not sure of what the minimum legal requirements are, they should seek professional advice,” Mr Harford said. “Retail NZ offers a specialised employment helpline for retailers, so there’s really no excuse for people trying to exploit others.

“A cornerstone of the New Zealand economy is that employees are treated fairly and reasonably by their employers. This means paying at least the minimum wage, offering at least the minimum holiday and sick leave entitlements, and generally being treated fairly and reasonably. It is just not acceptable for any employer to make people pay to get and keep their jobs, withhold wages without consent and not pay holiday pay.

“The good news is that most retailers know to do the right thing, and do treat their employees fairly. Those who don’t can expect that the authorities will take action, so it’s really important to get it right”.

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